

THE PIONEER PAPERS, No. V.

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# ONTARIO, CANADA:

ITS

PRESENT POSITION, RESOURCES, AND PROSPECTS

AS

**A FIELD FOR SETTLEMENT.**

BY

S. PHILLIPS DAY,

AUTHOR OF "ENGLISH AMERICA; OR, PICTURES OF CANADIAN PEOPLE  
AND PLACES."

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**PRICE ONE PENNY.**

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LONDON :

"LABOUR NEWS" PUBLISHING OFFICE, 1, LONG ACRE, W.C. ;

AND THROUGH ALL NEWSVENDORS.

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1874.

*The* EDITH *and* LORNE PIERCE  
COLLECTION *of* CANADIANA



*Queen's University at Kingston*

# ONTARIO:

## ITS PRESENT POSITION, RESOURCES, AND PROSPECTS.

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Ontario is the most important, populous, and opulent of the seven Provinces that comprise the newly-formed Dominion of Canada. Comparatively speaking it is but a new country. It lies north of the great Lakes Superior, Huron, Erie, and Ontario; while the Ottawa river divides it partly on the east and north from the province of Quebec, the population of which is principally of French extraction. On the north and west again it is bounded by the new province of Manitoba. The name Ontario, by which Western Canada is now designated, signifies "Beautiful;" for the Indians were wont to give very expressive appellations to localities, according to their situation or picturesqueness.

AREA AND POPULATION. — Ontario possesses an area of 122,000 square miles, equal to about eighty millions of acres. Accordingly, its territorial extent is as large as Great Britain and Ireland united. The population, which has augmented considerably during the last quarter of a century, amounts at present to nearly two millions. In 1830 the inhabitants numbered merely two hundred and ten thousand, so that the population of 1871, when the last Census was taken, amounted to eight times that of the period mentioned. This remarkable rate of increase shows that the Canadians are not much behind their southern neighbours in the race for prosperity. Of course, the population of Ontario would be still larger than it now is, were it not for the emigration to the Western States of the Union that periodically takes place. But on the other hand, it must be borne in mind that many American citizens have taken up their permanent abode in this portion of the British possessions. It is moreover alleged that when the next Census is taken it will be discovered that

the population has increased in a still greater ratio ; and that the settlement of the country is, figuratively speaking, but beginning.

CLIMATE.—The climate of Ontario is far from being insalubrious, although pretty cold in winter and equally warm in summer. The winter, however, is not arctic in its severity and duration. The atmosphere is generally clear and bright, fogs being almost entirely unknown in that region. Compared with this country Lower Canada is more changeable as regards heat and cold, but less so with reference to rain and sunshine. The rainfall amounts to nearly the same as it does in England. Spring opens in April and ends in May, when summer sets in rapidly. Autumn, or “the fall”—as this season is called all throughout the continent of America—lasts during September, October, and November, one portion thereof being mild and agreeable, so that it gets the name of the “Indian Summer.” The winter extends from December to the close of March ; but the severe cold is usually over with the month of February. The Canadian winter does not interfere with farmers keeping large heads of horned cattle, sheep and horses, which are exported in considerable numbers to the neighbouring States. Indeed there is much farm-work that can be better done in winter than at any other season of the year, such as the cutting and felling of trees, the removal of manure, fencing, and other matters which it is unnecessary to particularize.

CITIES, TOWNS, AND INCORPORATED VILLAGES.—Ontario possesses several well-built and excellent cities and towns in addition to villages and hamlets. The cities comprise the capital, Toronto, situated on a securely-protected bay of Lake Ontario, and having a resident population of at least 50,000 ; Kingston, a fortified place, on the outlet of the same lake, with a population of 14,000 ; Hamilton, a commercial city at the head of the navigation of Lake Ontario, with 19,000 inhabitants ; and London, a handsome inland city in the centre of the western peninsula, possessing a population close upon 12,000. Besides these important centres of population, there are thirty-six towns and forty-seven incorporated villages. And here it will not be out of place to remark on what constitutes the right to the title

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of village, town, and city. Places containing a population exceeding one thousand are termed police villages, and are governed by boards of police accordingly. When a district exceeds one thousand residents it becomes an incorporated village, and its local affairs are managed by a council of five. When a locality acquires a population above three thousand, it at once rises to the dignity of a town, and can elect its mayor and common council, besides being represented in the county council by a reeve and his deputy. As soon as a place has over ten thousand inhabitants, it is created a city, thereby conferring high municipal privileges upon the locality so honoured.

THE MUNICIPAL SYSTEM.—The local government of the province, while it is simple, seems fitly adapted to the wants of a new country. Ontario is divided into forty-two counties. These again are subdivided into townships, and town and village municipalities, the cities being separate and distinct for municipal purposes. Municipal bodies are empowered to levy by direct taxation such moneys as may be found requisite for the making of roads, bridges, etc., as well as for drainage and the maintenance of schools and police. This taxation, however, does not usually exceed more than ten dollars annually for every hundred acres. The municipal councils are restrained by law from incurring obligations that would raise the taxation to more than two per cent. of the municipal property.

RAILWAYS.—Railway extension has progressed rapidly throughout the Canadian provinces, especially in Ontario. In 1853 there were but a few miles of railway in the country, none at all in the west. At present we find no fewer than thirty-five lines in active operation, extending considerably over three thousand miles. The Grand Trunk line—one of the most important of all—is quite eleven hundred and twelve miles in extent, apart from its divergent branches, which coupled together, make a total of thirteen hundred and ninety miles. Already nearly three hundred miles are laid of the Intercolonial Railway, which is to connect the province of Quebec with the sister province of New Brunswick; while the projected Canadian Pacific line will be two thousand five hundred miles long, and must take at least a million sterling to lay down. By the con-

struction of this line the Pacific coast will not only be brought six hundred miles nearer to Ontario, but even New York, Boston, and Portland will reap a similar advantage. Compared with the Union Pacific Railway of the United States, the Canadian line will shorten the passage from Liverpool to China and Japan by at least one thousand miles.

**SURVEYED, SETTLED, AND FREE GRANT LANDS.**—Of the eighty million acres that comprise Ontario, but twenty-five million acres are surveyed, twenty-one million of which are sold. The still disposable surveyed lands lie to the rear of the frontier settlements on Lake Ontario, between the Ottawa river and the Georgian Bay, besides north of Lakes Huron and Superior. The western peninsula is almost entirely settled, and held by private persons. This large tract of country, which for a long time has absorbed much of the immigration from Europe, is known as “the garden of Canada,” owing to the exuberance of the soil. The Provincial Government, in order to encourage emigration, have thrown open a number of townships, into any of which immigrants may select for themselves a future and permanent home. Each head of a family can obtain a grant of 200 acres ; while young men and women who have reached the age of eighteen, may possess themselves of 100 acres. These townships have been opened for settlement by virtue of the Free Grant and Homestead Act which became law in February, 1868. Moreover, any association of ten persons or over, resident for a year in the province, may have a block of land with a “lot” for each associate “located” to them, while each person may receive besides the \$15, granted by the Act of 1872, \$15 extra on complying with another section of the Act respecting clearing and building.

**PUBLIC WORKS.**—Ontario is not deficient in public works, which having been erected at the expense of the public, are necessarily under Government control. Among those already established may be mentioned a provincial Agricultural College, possessing an extensive experimental farm, and suitable buildings in connection therewith, a College of Technology, or School of Industrial Science ; an Institute for the Blind, and another for the Insane ; a Central Prison, five docks, and other works to obviate



rapids and other obstructions to navigation in different places ; a variety of works for the drainage of marshy lands, etc., etc.

**PORTS AND CANALS.**—There are no less than fifty-three ports in Ontario at which customs are collected. The great canals embrace the Welland and the Rideau ; the former being situated between Lakes Erie and Ontario, and the latter between the cities of Kingston and Ottawa, the Dominion capital, located in the adjoining province of Quebec. By means of these canals many miles of inland coast is opened with the sea, thus removing all obstructions from the carrying trade. The Welland canal has twenty-seven locks, by means of which an acclivity of three hundred and thirty feet is ascended to the waters of Lake Erie, which is one thousand and forty miles from the ocean, and five hundred and sixty-four feet above its level. Even the American cities contiguous to the great lakes are rapidly opening up a direct trade with Europe through Canadian waters.

**INDUSTRIES.**—Although Ontario is principally an agricultural country, nevertheless a number of industries are carried on therein. The principal articles of manufacture which give constant employment to numbers of persons, male and female, consist of cloth, linen, furniture, sawn timber, iron and hardware, paper, soap, cotton and woollen goods, steam engines and locomotives, wooden ware of all descriptions, agricultural implements, etc. Owing to an unlimited supply of water-power various descriptions of manufactures are increasing throughout the province. To the above-named industries flax culture remains to be added. At present Ontario contains sixty scutch mills. Hemp, tobacco, and sugar beet are likewise raised in large quantities, and yield considerable profit.

**TRADE AND COMMERCE.**—The trade and commerce of Ontario have trebled within the last quarter of a century. The total value of the exports and imports of the province for the last fiscal year amounted to twelve millions sterling.

**MINES AND MINERALS.**—The country between the Georgian Bay and the Ottawa River is rich in minerals. These principally consist of copper, iron, lead, salt, plumbago, arsenic, antimony, manganese, gypsum, and two descriptions of spar. Mica is found

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in large quantities and is profitably worked. What are called the Bruce Mines on the north shore of Lake Huron produce much copper ore and metal, which to the value of £50,000 are annually exported. Silver is likewise found on the shores of Lake Superior.

EDUCATION.—In Ontario education is making rapid and yet steady strides. The law secures to all persons from five to twenty-one years of age the right of attending the common schools. The number of national and grammar schools are sufficiently numerous to meet the wants of the juvenile population. The government appropriations in support of these educational establishments amount to nearly £400,000 annually. The progress of education in the province is, of course, furthered by the Normal and Model Schools of Toronto, towards the erection of which the legislature granted £25,000. In the Normal School instruction is imparted to teachers, so as to qualify them for the proper performance of their intended calling; while the Model Schools are designed to be the model for all the public schools of the Province. Free libraries are likewise scattered throughout Ontario, containing altogether some 200,000 volumes. Then there are twenty-six Mechanics' Institutes which receive legislative aid to the extent of \$3,000 a year towards their efficient support. In these institutes instruction is regularly given in grammar, penmanship, mathematics, bookkeeping, ornamental and mechanical drawing, chemistry, and other important branches of education.

SAVINGS' BANKS.—Following the excellent system adopted in this country, savings' banks have been widely established in connection with the numerous post-offices of the Province; the system has only been in operation for a few years. Over two million dollars are deposited in the hands of the Receiver-General. No individual can deposit more than \$300 within a year. Interest is allowed at from four to five per cent. per annum. Money orders are obtainable at most of the post-offices, in exchange with Great Britain and the United States, the advantage of which accommodation is obvious.

CLASSES MOST REQUIRED IN ONTARIO.—There can be no question that this province is quite capable of maintaining a very



much larger population than it at present possesses, or is likely to possess for a long time to come. But then the immigrants must be persons of the right sort. The class most of all needed are farmers with some means who could afford to take up settlements and employ labour to clear their lands and purchase farm implements and live stock. Nevertheless a goodly number of strong, healthy, hardy, self-reliant, industrious agricultural labourers and others need not despair of finding suitable employment upon their arrival out, provided they get to their destination at the proper time. Many farmers, now well-to-do, who began at the lowest round of the social ladder, have succeeded in working themselves into their excellent positions by dint of sheer pluck and perseverance. What some have done, others may succeed in accomplishing. But beside ordinary farm labourers and dairy maids, there is scope in the Province for artisans of various descriptions, not omitting ordinary labourers. The following statement will show the nature of the most active industries in Ontario, and the rate of wages received by handicraftsmen of different grades :—

CALLINGS.	AVERAGE DAILY WAGES.
Bakers .....	\$1.25
Blacksmiths .....	1.00 to 2.00
Bookbinders .....	1.00 to 1.50
Bricklayers .....	2.00 to 3.50
Coopers .....	1.50 to 2.00
Cabinet-makers .....	1.20 to 2.60
Carpenters .....	1.25 to 2.50
Machinists .....	1.50 to 2.50
Masons .....	1.75 to 3.50
Millers .....	1.50 to 2.00
Plasterers .....	1.25 to 2.50
Painters .....	1.25 to 2.00
Plumbers .....	1.25 to 2.50
Rope Makers .....	0.75 to 1.50
Saddlers and Harness Makers .....	1.25 to 2.50
Shoemakers .....	1.00 to 2.00
Tanners .....	1.00 to 1.50
Tailors .....	1.25 to 2.00
Tinsmiths .....	1.25 to 1.70
Wheelwrights .....	0.75 to 2.50

In addition to the classes enumerated above, farm servants of both sexes receive from \$10 to \$20 per month ; dairymaids and domestic servants from \$4 to \$15 a month ; cooks from \$4 to

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\$15 per month; and ordinary labourers from \$1 to \$1.50 per diem. The value of a Canadian dollar is exactly 4/2.

ASSISTED PASSAGES.—The present rates of passages from Liverpool to Quebec are £3 sterling, per adult; £1 10s. per child under eight years of age; and 10s. for infants under one year. Moreover, the Government of the Dominion of Canada gives valuable assistance to agricultural labourers and domestic servants, to which class a bonus of £1 4s. 8d. (\$6) is granted after three months' residence in the Province. In addition, one-half this sum is given to children over one and under twelve years old. Further, all emigrants in need of such help will be conveyed from Quebec by rail to Toronto, or any station nearest to their intended destination, *free of charge*.

COST OF LIVING IN ONTARIO.—Food is in great abundance, and consequently extremely moderate in price. Flour ranges from \$5 to \$7 per barrel, butter from 15 to 20 cents a lb., and eggs from 10 to 20 cents a dozen. Butcher's meat can be had from 6 to 20 cents per lb., fowls from 30 to 50 cents per couple, geese from 40 to 50 cents each, and turkeys for \$1. Potatoes, which are pretty good, are generally sold at from 30 to 50 cents a bushel; while such luxuries as tea and sugar are proportionately cheap, the former costing from 50 to 70 cents per lb., and the latter from 8 to 15 cents. Rents are likewise moderate; while plain board and lodging may be obtained very cheaply, especially in the rural districts. All clothing, except such as is home-made, like tweeds, boots, shoes, etc., is about 25 per cent dearer than in Great Britain.

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**N.B.—Arrangements for Passages to Canada  
can be made at the Labour Agency, as above.**